

Appl. No.: 10/807,657
Amdt. dated 01/31/2006
Reply to Office action of January 5, 2006

REMARKS

This Amendment is filed in response to the Office Action dated January 5, 2006. Applicants first note with appreciation the Examiner's thorough examination of the application as evidenced by the Office Action. In response to the Office Action, Applicants have canceled claims 17, 26-41, and 44-49, amended Claims 10, 12, 18-20, and 23-25, and added new claims 50-54. Following these amendments, the application now includes Claims 1-16, 18-25, 42, 43, and 50-54, with Claims 1, 7, 10, 19, 23-25, and 42 being independent claims. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the application in light of the following remarks.

I. Amended Claims 10 Is In Proper Form

On page 2, the Office Action objects to Claim 10 for repeating the word "said" twice consecutively. Applicants have amended Claim 10 to remove one of the "saids" in the claim. Claim 10 is now in proper form.

II. Claims 1-9, 42 and 43 Are Allowed

Applicants note with appreciation the indication that Claims 1-9, 42, and 43 are allowed.

III. Independent Claims 10, 19, and 23-25 Are Patentable

On page 9, the Office Action indicates that Claims 17-25 and 33-40 include allowable subject matter. In light of this favorable indication, Applicants amended Claim 10 to include the recitations of Claim 17. Further, Applicants rewrote Claims 19 and 23-25 into independent form. Applicants therefore submit that amended independent Claims 10, 19, and 23-25 are now in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

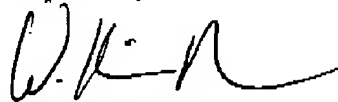
In light of the canceled, amended, and added claims and the remarks above, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance and respectfully request that

Appl. No.: 10/807,657
Amdt. dated 01/31/2006
Reply to Office action of January 5, 2006

a Notice of Allowance be issued. The Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicants' counsel to discuss any outstanding issues so as to expedite the application.

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 CFR § 1.136(a), and any fee required therefore (including fees for net addition of claims) is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 16-0605.

Respectfully submitted,

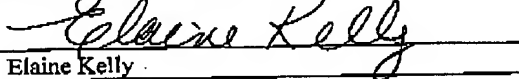


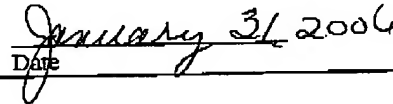
W. Kevin Ransom
Registration No. 45,031

Customer No. 00826
ALSTON & BIRD LLP
Bank of America Plaza
101 South Tryon Street, Suite 4000
Charlotte, NC 28280-4000
Tel Charlotte Office (704) 444-1000
Fax Charlotte Office (704) 444-1111

CERTIFICATION OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this paper is being facsimile transmitted to the US Patent and Trademark Office at Fax No. (571) 273-8300 on the date shown below.


Elaine Kelly


Date

CLT01/4787505v1